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CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE

OF

PUBLIC AFFAIRS,

AND

THE MEANS OF RAISING THE NECESSARY SUPPLIES.

BY

WILLIAM PULTENEY, Esq.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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MDCCLXXIX.

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I Took the liberty, laſt year, to lay before the Public, the ſentiments which then preſented themſelves to my mind, with reſpect to our American affairs.

A very new ſituation has ſince occurred, and however unequal I may think myſelf to the taſk of giving any information, or of ſuggeſting any ideas, upon a ſubject, which muſt have exerciſed the anxious thoughts, of the ableſt men in the kingdom, yet, in a criſis of ſo much importance, and even danger, I ſhould think myſelf blameable, if I did not attempt to ſtate my opinion, however inſignificant, leſt, by with-holding it, I ſhould ſeem unwilling to contribute every thing in my power, to the public ſervice.

As I aim at no object but the public proſperity, and mean not to ſerve the intereſted views of any party whatſoever, my ſentiments will probably give no ſatisfaction, to the zealous partizans of that deſcription, in whatever claſs they may happen to be ranged; but if any thing which has occurred to me, ſhall meet with the approbation of thoſe, who are elevated above ſuch limited views, the purpoſes of this Publication will be fully anſwered.

It has always appeared to me, that the great load of our Public Debt was a millſtone, which, ſooner or later, would endanger almoſt the exiſtence of this Kingdom. I thought ſo at the laſt Peace, and I ſaw with indignation the alarming addition, which was then made, to our ordinary expences, commonly called our *Peace Eſtabliſhment*. That meaſure excited, however, no remarkable diſguſt in the Nation at large, for mankind in general, as well as Princes, have undoubtedly a predilection to large eſtabliſhments; and as the additional expence was defrayed out of the Sinking Fund, without any new Tax, that deſtructive meaſure, paſſed at the time, almoſt without obſervation or cenſure.

We have lived long enough, however, to experience the conſequences of our folly, if not to repent of it; and I have great reaſon to ſpeak confidently, when I ſay, that the enormous amount of our national Debt, has been one of the chief cauſes of the American reſiſtance, and has, above all other things, encouraged France to engage in

the preſent conteſt; and not only has it encouraged our enemies, and depreſſed our own minds, but the taxes upon many of the neceſſaries of life, which it has occaſioned, have cramped the induſtry of our people, and have thereby diminiſhed our power, as well as our importance.

As the very meritorious conduct of this country, in giving up the claim of Taxation, and ſending out Commiſſioners to treat, on the moſt liberal footing, with America, has failed of ſucceſs; and as the Congreſs is underſtood to have entered into a treaty, offenſive and defenſive, with our natural enemy, no option ſeems now to be left us, but either to proceed with the utmoſt vigour, in proſecuting the war, or to ſubmit, not only to the claim of American Independence, but to ſuch further conditions of peace, as France and the Congreſs may think proper to impoſe; for it is not to be imagined, that France, if we were ready to yield, would demand nothing for herſelf; or that the Congreſs would, in ſuch a caſe, either diſunite themſelves from France, or be contented with the ſimple acknowledgment of Independence:—Beſides, it would be diſhonourable in the higheſt degree, upon our parts, to deſert, unconditionally, thoſe friends in America, who, from a ſenſe of duty and allegiance, have hitherto ſtood firmly by us, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes.

But even if theſe points could, by a timid ſubmiſſion, be obtained, as I believe they could not, yet it behoves us to look forward, to the conſe-

quences, of American independence, founded on the interpoſition of the French nation, and in what manner our future ſecurity, is conſiſtent, with a connection ſo formed and ſupported.

That the proceeding of this Country, in paſſing the Conciliatory Bills, was wiſe and juſt, I am ſtill moſt fully convinced; and I am alſo perſuaded, that, notwithſtanding the rejection of our terms by the Congreſs, theſe Bills, and the Commiſſion which accompanied them, have been already attended with very important effects; for, beſides having united, as I flatter myſelf they have done, almoſt every impartial man in this country, in the common cauſe, there is reaſon to believe, that, by removing every fair and honourable ground of union, they have, as might well be expected, greatly divided the Americans, and they have eſſentially diminiſhed, the reſpect formerly paid to the Continental Congreſs, by bringing to light the real views, of that body of men.

Nothing, to be ſure, could be more unfortunate, than the moment at which our Commiſſioners arrived in America; at a time when the news of a French treaty, haſtily concluded to diſappoint us, had arrived before them; accompanied with the promiſe of a French fleet of great force, which ſoon after did arrive; and when at the ſame time, as if to complete the appearances of our humiliation, the orders for evacuating Philadelphia, and leaving our numerous friends there, expoſed to their inveterate enemies, were publicly known.

It is in vain for us, however, to look back, except for the purpoſe of puniſhing thoſe whoſe miſconduct may have deſerved it; and that meaſure, I hope and truſt will be ſteadily purſued; but it is of the laſt conſequence, that we ſhould look forward, in this very new and important criſis.

In the preſent ſituation of our affairs, thoſe, who are ſufficiently detached from party-connections, and are influenced by no other motive, than that intereſt, which all men have in the public proſperity, are naturally led to conſider, whether the object we are now contending for, by the war, deſerves to be purſued; and if it does, whether or not it be attainable, and by what means?

The object now, I apprehend, is, to preſerve ſuch a connection with the Colonies in North America, as to unite the force of the whole empire, in time of war, for the common ſafety; ſo that no one part may be thrown into the ſcale of a foreign enemy, to the prejudice of the other part.

This object, it is imagined, will be attained, if the Colonies acknowledge the ſame King, which involves the power of peace and war, and the rights of mutual naturalization and ſucceſſion; and this point is at the ſame time conſiſtent, with the moſt ample ideas, of a free conſtitution in each of the Colonies, and even of a Congreſs, in the nature of a general Parliament, to take care of the general intereſts of the whole. It is perfectly conſiſtent too, with the idea, of an excluſive

ſive power in the Colony Aſſemblies, and Congreſs, to impoſe taxes in that country, and of an excluſive power, to vote the number of troops to be kept up in their reſpective provinces, ſimilar to the control of the Britiſh Parliament, upon the Crown, with reſpect to troops in Great Britain; ſtill more is it conſiſtent, with the idea, of their enjoying a trade, almoſt free from reſtriction, not only to Great Britain, but to all parts of the world.

It is difficult to imagine, what any reaſonable man in the Colonies can wiſh for more; and if Great Britain were willing, as I hope ſhe would be, to give, beſides, a ſhare in the general government of the Empire to theſe Colonies, by admitting repreſentatives from their reſpective Aſſemblies, to a ſeat in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons *, and a vote in all queſtions (except as to taxes impoſed here) it would ſeem to place the Colonies in the happieſt ſituation, that has ever fallen to the lot of any body of people, ſince the beginning of time. They would, I apprehend, derive every poſſible advantage from ſuch a connection, without any one diſadvantage which it is poſſible to conceive.

The whole force of Great Britain, and of its navy, would ſerve to them as a protection and ſupport. The great expence of the civil government here, would fall entirely upon us, and they would be only obliged to defray the very moderate expence, of their own internal governments.

* This point, concerning Repreſentation here, is of a delicate nature; but under proper qualifications, I apprehend it would be advantageous to both Countries.

Their

Their trade would not only be free to this country, but would have a natural preference here, to that of other nations; the large capitals of the merchants of this country, would continue to ſupport and extend their agriculture and improvements of every kind; and, free from the riſk of internal diſcords, or external annoyance, they would enjoy every privilege, pre-eminence, and advantage of Britiſh ſubjects.

On the other hand, every power of injury, or of oppreſſion, from hence, would be at an end. They would not truſt to our virtue or good faith; for, by having the excluſive power of voting and levying their own money, and of regulating the number of their troops, the future government of America would be carried on by the conſent of the people alone, and by the voice of the repreſentatives choſen by them. The power of voting their own money, and of regulating their military force, would involve a redreſs of every other poſſible grievance: it is preciſely the control, which the Britiſh Parliament has in this country, over the Crown, and for which our anceſtors contended ſucceſsfully, in the reign of Charles the Firſt. The removal of cuſtom-houſe officers named by the Crown, the ſecurity of charters, the control over judges and governors, which they ſo much deſired; in ſhort, every point from which the leaſt jealouſy has ever ariſen, would naturally follow; nor would the Americans have to dread their being involved in the expence of our wars, ſince

it would be in their own power, to refuſe to contribute to that expence.

What then would the Colonies loſe by giving up their claim of Independency? They would give up the power, indeed, of ſending Ambaſſadors to the Court of France, to contrive there, the means of humbling and weakening, the Mother-country, and of exalting the power, of the common enemy of Europe. But they would certainly be expoſed, to the riſk of having their Aſſemblies managed, by the intrigues and money of that artful people, and of having the manners of that country, imperceptibly introduced amongſt them. They would be expoſed, too, to thoſe diſſentions and civil wars, which their new, and, I think, very defective conſtitutions of government, in an extenſive continent, would certainly introduce; and they would ſoon feel, the enormous expence, which by degrees would be entailed upon them, by their new ſituation.

The body of the people in that country, were made to believe, that, by their new conſtitutions, the power would be placed in their hands; becauſe every perſon, it was ſaid, in any truſt or authority, was to be choſen, directly or indirectly, by them: but they have already ſeen, that by laws made by their own Repreſentatives, the right of voting can be altered and reſtrained, ſo as to model the elections, according to the will of their preſent Rulers; and when to this infringement of their conſtitutions, the effects of French money,

ſhall

ſhall come to be added, the power of the people, will ſoon be found to be nothing but a phantom.

" America," we are told, by the Congreſs, " is now ſtationed amongſt the Powers of the " Earth, and is clothed in robes of ſovereignty *." But was ſhe not heretofore numbered amongſt the Powers of the Earth, before ſhe declared herſelf independent, and before the claim of taxation had been ſet up by this country? Is not Yorkſhire one of the Powers of the Earth? is not Wales? is not Scotland? is not Ireland? and ſo much the more reſpectable, that they are united under the general denomination of the Britiſh State.—Does it exclude a people from being one of the Powers of the Earth, if they make a part of an empire, in which other people are included with them? If ſo, then each of the Thirteen Provinces, are no longer Powers of the Earth, becauſe they make a part only of the general confederacy. Each American State, muſt upon that principle, be an independent power, in order to be ſtationed amongſt the Powers of the Earth; each diſtrict, each village, nay each individual.—But the nature of ſociety requires, that great bodies of men, ſhould unite together, under one ſyſtem of government, and each individual, each village, each diſtrict, then partakes, of the dignity of the whole. America did, and America would ſtill, partake of the robes of ſovereignty belonging to the Britiſh Empire, each individual being intitled to equal pri-

* See the Congreſs Account, 11th Auguſt, 1778, of the Ceremonial at receiving the French Ambaſſador.

vileges, and all parts concurring for the general proſperity.

It is true, the Members of the Congreſs, would not, in that caſe, exerciſe all the rights of ſovereignty, though they would ſtill exerciſe important ones; and there the difficulty, I preſume, hinges. *They*, would not have the pride, of making bows and reverences, to an Ambaſſador of France. But will the people of America enjoy more happineſs or more dignity, under the ſovereignty of a Congreſs, allied to France, than under the ſovereignty, of the limited Monarch of Great Britain, on the terms now propoſed, and conſtituting a part, and a moſt reſpectable part, of the Britiſh Empire?

Actuated by ſuch motives, it is no wonder that the Congreſs, are not ready to admit, that the conceſſions of this country, have made any change in the conteſt. It is no wonder that they hold it ſtill, to be the duty of the people of America, to throw off their allegiance, and to renounce their connection with Britain, though, to accompliſh it, they muſt involve their country in a dangerous connection with France. It is no wonder, that they make uſe of the ſtale trick, of repreſenting this country, as unfit to be truſted, and that a great and magnanimous people, are capable of acting towards them, in this caſe, with the mean artifice of a petty tyrant, in a barbarous age.

But the Congreſs know, that the queſtion is not now, whether America ſhall ſubmit, to an arbitrary government, to be exerciſed by the King

and Parliament here, without being put upon an equal footing with every other ſubject of the empire. They know, that the control propoſed to be given to the Colony Aſſemblies and Congreſs, is fitted to anſwer every purpoſe of freedom.

If danger to liberty were ſtill to be apprehended, I confeſs, it would admit of an argument, whether the dangerous connection with France, ought not to be riſked, as an option between two evils. But it would be as reaſonable, for Scotland or Ireland, to prefer a ſimilar connection with France, as it would now be for America.

If the connection with Great Britain, is ſo deteſtable, and of ſo little value, I would aſk, in what light the Americans would have viewed that connection, if the King's reſidence had been in America, inſtead of England? Would America, in that caſe, have thought it advantageous to diſmember itſelf from Britain? If not, why ſhould it be advantageous now? for it were eaſy to ſhew, that it is advantageous for America, as well as Britain, that the reſidence of government, ſhould be placed, on the frontier neareſt to France.

The renouncing Great Britain, therefore, upon the terms now propoſed, ſeems to me, to be the renouncing of that, which ought to be, to America, the object of the moſt earneſt wiſhes, that it is to renounce their birthright, for a mere phantom, and to throw away the moſt precious jewel, to graſp with eagerneſs a worthleſs ſtone.

Are there no ties which bind mankind in ſociety? If it was juſtifiable, on the part of the Colo-

nies, under all the circumſtances of the caſe, to reſiſt the former pretenſions of this Country, by arms, yet is it juſtifiable now, after every point which can be favourable to liberty is conceded, to perſiſt in that reſiſtance? And upon what principle, either of law, morality, or religion, can ſuch a reſiſtance be now defended? Does a Government, by once claiming any point, which freedom cannot yield, immediately forfeit, for ever, all the rights which bind ſociety together, and that theſe rights can never revive by the moſt ample conceſſions or atonement? If the point in diſpute, is of a doubtful nature, ſo much ſo, as to divide in opinion, ſome of the ableſt and moſt impartial men on both ſides, does the inſiſting for a time, upon ſuch a point, in like manner, forfeit, for ever, all the original bonds of union and allegiance?

It may be aſked, what will remain to Great Britain, after ſo much is conceded to the Colonies? If all power of keeping troops in America, is taken from the Crown, authority, it may be ſaid, will be at an end, and the Americans will, in fact, be independent, without the name; with this manifeſt diſadvantage to Great Britain, that we muſt be involved in their quarrels, as much, as heretofore, without deriving any benefit, from the connection, either in the way of excluſive trade, or of taxation.

This objection is of a very ſerious nature; and if it be well founded, we can have no motive for continuing the war, except that of reducing the power of France, and ought to get out of it, as faſt as we can.

But

But I conceive, that the ſituation of Great Britain, upon the footing of the propoſed connection with the colonies, would be ſuch, as we ought to deſire, and would perhaps be better for both countries, our new debt excepted, than the boaſted ſituation before the commencement of the preſent conteſt. By this ſort of connection, every ſource of jealouſy would for ever be removed, the people of America, would be free from every apprehenſion of danger to liberty, their natural affection for a people, from whom they are ſprung, poſſeſſing the ſame manners, language, religion, and laws, and having the ſame common intereſt, would certainly return. The connection ariſing from our having the ſame King, would unite us in the ſame views; there would be no occaſion for faction or intrigue to preſerve that connection, for it would be impoſſible for either party, to wiſh any improvement upon it.—We ſhould be relieved, from the great expence, which attended the keeping troops in that country, a meaſure which could only be neceſſary, to enforce a government, which the great body of the people diſliked; all the expence of their civil government, would be defrayed by the Americans themſelves, and the proſperity of America, would be more than ever, the intereſt and the wiſh of this country. Her ports would be open to us, and in time of war, would be open to us alone, at leaſt not to our declared enemies.

On the other hand, if America is declared independent, or if by withdrawing our troops, before a fair arrangement is made, ſhe ſhall become

independent,

independent, will ſhe not continue to aid France in the preſent war, and is it not moſt probable, that ſhe will be thrown irretrievably into the ſcale of France? an alarming circumſtance for all Europe, and particularly alarming for Great Britain, Holland, and Spain.—Can we, in that caſe, long preſerve Canada, Nova Scotia, the fiſheries of Newfoundland, or either of the Floridas? Can we preſerve our Weſt-India iſlands, and if we were ready to give up the whole of theſe, as in that caſe perhaps in wiſdom we ought *, can we preſerve the Eaſt-Indies, or the Guinea trade? If theſe too

* The maintaining diſtant poſſeſſions, by a ſtrong military force, in the face of a powerful enemy, where theſe poſſeſſions, do not yield a revenue, ſufficient to defray the expence, muſt end in the ruin of every country. The Spaniſh monarchy, was not perhaps ſo much debilitated, by the loſs of the Seven United Provinces, as by the expence of maintaining thoſe which adhered to her. Our remaining territories in North America, could not be maintained, without a great force, any more than Newfoundland: and with reſpect to our Weſt-India Iſlands, we could not bring home the produce in time of war, if America, poſſeſſed of a naval force, took part againſt us; becauſe the winds and currents, oblige our veſſels, particularly thoſe from Jamaica, now that Cape Nicholas Mole is fortified, in returning from the Weſt-India Iſlands, to run along the American coaſt; and as the iſlands themſelves could at any time be attacked from America, before we could know of it here, we ſhould be obliged to waſte our people, and exhauſt our treaſure, by keeping, at all times, a great military, as well as naval force, in thoſe unhealthy climates, for their defence, with this new diſadvantage, that the materials for our navy, and the proviſions for the whole of our force, muſt in that caſe be ſent from Europe.

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muſt go, to what will Great Britain be reduced, or how long can ſhe hope to preſerve the empire of the ſea, or even to ſupport herſelf as an independent kingdom?

If it be ſaid, that by acknowledging the Independency of America, peace will be immediately reſtored, I would firſt aſk, whether peace ought to be purchaſed at ſuch a price, leaving America united with France? And I would again aſk, upon what authority this ſuppoſition is founded? The Congreſs have not ſaid ſo; they have only offered, if their Independency is acknowledged, or our troops withdrawn, to treat with us, upon ſuch terms as are conſiſtent with treaties, which they have made, but which they have not ventured to diſcloſe. Have they not kept an account, of all the damages ſuſtained by the war? Have they not avowed the purpoſe of preſerving ſuch an account? And are we ready to pay for theſe damages? Have they given the leaſt inſinuation, that they will renounce their French connection? Has France declared, that ſhe will conſent to their renouncing that connection, or has ſhe declared that ſhe has no demands to make, after the acknowledgment of Independence? I believe it is no ſecret, that France has ſignified, what would be the loweſt of her demands, in ſuch a caſe, and that they are ſufficiently humiliating.

If we are not, therefore, ready to give up all, muſt we not, in defence of what we may refuſe to give up, be neceſſarily drawn into expence and exertions, ſimilar to thoſe, in which we are now engaged? and would we not afterwards, have more

difficulty

difficulty than now, in defending ourſelves againſt theſe new pretenſions, when America, by the declaration of Independence, had become firmly united againſt us, by the forfeiture and deſtruction of all our friends in that country? And are we not more able now, to maintain the conteſt, when in poſſeſſion of ſuch important parts of North America, and with ſuch numbers of the inhabitants, either already engaged in our cauſe, or wiſhing to ſupport it, beſides the reaſonable proſpect we have, of a much greater acceſſion of the inhabitants of that Continent, ſo ſoon as we ſhall convince them, by vigorous exertions, that we are heartily in earneſt, and that we are unalterably determined, to make good our point?

If ſuch muſt be the neceſſary conſequences of giving way to the claims of the Congreſs, little doubt I think can remain, that the object of compelling the diſaffected part of the Thirteen Colonies, to embrace, that fair and honourable connection, which is now held out to them, is not only deſirable, but eſſentially neceſſary, to our own exiſtence, as an independent people.

Perſons of all ranks are intereſted in this, and however the heat of party, and former opinions, may for a time deceive a part of this country, I am convinced, that when they come to conſider attentively the train of conſequences, which are neceſſarily connected with this object, they will forget their animoſity, and unite in the proper meaſures, for preſerving, from ſuch imminent danger, the ſtate to which they belong.

That

That the object is attainable, I am alſo moſt fully convinced; but not unleſs the adminiſtration of public affairs, is directed, by men of fortitude and exertion, equal to the great occaſion, by men, who like Lord Chatham, are capable of ſelecting, and reſolute in employing, the moſt proper officers by ſea and land, by men, who are not to be depreſſed or elated, by every little change of fortune; whoſe minds are not only capable of taking in the whole views of this great ſubject, and of deciding with wiſdom and diſpatch upon every occurrence, but of proſecuting with vigor, perſeverance, and induſtry, ſuch plans, as, after full information, are found to be moſt fit, and with ſuch frugality and œconomy of the public money, as may enable us to perſiſt in the conteſt, as long as ſhall be neceſſary.

Till the late offers of conciliation were made to America, a great part of this kingdom, were averſe to the war. The miniſters themſelves, carried it on with languor and reluctance, and the officers of our fleets and armies, performed their duty, without that ardent zeal, which can alone inſure ſucceſs. The generous temper of an Engliſhman, could not be induced, to act with full vigour, in ſupport of pretenſions, which certainly would have tended, to reduce our fellow-ſubjects, to a ſtate unworthy of freemen.—On the other hand, America was in general united, and few were our friends there, at the bottom of their hearts.—The conteſt is now entirely changed. The offers of Great Britain have been ſuch, as became a brave and generous nation, and have left nothing, in point of freedom, to be wiſhed for, by

our fellow-ſubjects. The rejection of theſe offers by the Congreſs, has diſpelled every doubt, in the minds of impartial men, with reſpect to the juſtice of the war; and the unnatural object, of reducing the power of Great Britain, avowed in the treaty, made by the artful American deputies, with the government of France, has rouſed the indignation of every generous Briton; at the ſame time, that the great body of the people in America, have now ſeen, the true object of thoſe, who had till then, profeſſed the freedom of America, as the ſole motive of their conduct. It now appears, that, in fact, they had another and more favourite motive, namely, their private ambition. The ſeverities they have of late been obliged to exerciſe, upon the people of America, are evident proofs, that now they govern by a faction, and not with the conſent of the body of the people, who plainly ſee, that their ſufferings are diſregarded, whilſt they ſerve as the means, of exalting and ſupporting in authority, a few men, who, by artful pretences, have raiſed themſelves into power and conſequence.

In conſidering this queſtion therefore, how far, the object is attainable, we are not to ſuppoſe, that we have now to contend, with the united power of America, but only with a part of that people; a part indeed, who are in poſſeſſion of the executive power, and have arms in their hands, but who are not ſupported, by the majority of the people, either with reſpect to property or numbers.

France, is no doubt to be added to the ſcale againſt us; but I do not conceive it poſſible, that either

either Holland or Spain, are to be numbered in this conteſt amongſt our enemies; becauſe, if it is propoſed on our part, to remove, as I think we ought, almoſt every obſtruction to the American trade, with the reſt of the world *, neither of theſe powers, can have any poſſible motive of intereſt, for ſupporting American independence, but directly the contrary, ſince it is evidently againſt the intereſt of both theſe powers, to add America to the ſcale of France.

Neither can I ſuppoſe, that, in the preſent ſtate of the conteſt, which certainly is, whether America ſhall be thrown into the ſcale of the moſt ambitious power in Europe, we can want alliances. At all events, if Spain ſhould take part with France, we could not fail, in ſuch a caſe, to derive the moſt effectual aſſiſtance, from thoſe maritime powers in the North, whoſe evident intereſt it would be, to prevent the balance of naval power, from preponderating in favour of France and Spain.

If the object be worth contending for, and can hardly be purchaſed at too high a price; if it be intimately connected with our exiſtence, as an independent nation; and if it be attainable, notwithſtanding all that has hitherto befallen us, the next queſtion is, with reſpect to the means to be employed.

I will not take upon me, to enter into an examination, of the proper military operations, either

* Upon this point, ſo contrary to eſtabliſhed prejudices, I do not expect, at the firſt mention of it, a general aſſent. It would require to be diſcuſſed, at conſiderable length, if this were a proper place.

by ſea or land, which will require to be diſcuſſed by an abler hand; all I ſhall ſay upon that ſubject is, that, without the moſt unprejudiced and unremitting attention, in the choice of our commanders in chief by ſea and land, and without the moſt determined firmneſs, to enquire into, and to puniſh, miſconduct of every kind, accompanied with a noble eagerneſs to reward diſtinguiſhed merit, it will be in vain, after ſo long a peace, to expect thoſe animated exertions, which, in former times, have ſo often diſtinguiſhed the Britiſh nation.

But ſuppoſing, every proper meaſure to be adopted, both in the civil and military line, as well as with reſpect to foreign alliances, another moſt intereſting and important queſtion remains; Whether the reſources of this nation, are ſtill ſufficient, to ſupport a war againſt America, united with France and Spain? and whether there is any probability, of raiſing the annual ſupplies, for the length of time that may become neceſſary? That it may not be ſufficient to raiſe theſe ſupplies for a year or two, is but too evident; we muſt be prepared to hold out for many years, and muſt decidedly take our arrangements upon that footing, otherwiſe we may expect, that our enemies will continue to perſevere in the conteſt, from the flattering hope, of our being ſoon exhauſted.

It is well known, that the French Miniſters, as well as the Americans, have derived their chief hope of ſucceſs, on this occaſion, from the ſituation of our public debt, and from the expectation they have formed, that, in a little time, our reſources

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of money will totally fail. They have even publicly expreſſed this, to be the chief ground of their expectation; and they have entertained opinions, upon the ſubject of our finances, which, I flatter myſelf, notwithſtanding our miſmanagement, are extremely ill founded. The imperfect attention, which, from 1762, was unfortunately paid, during the twelve years of peace, to diminiſh the public debt, and to improve our revenue, and the unpardonable addition, which was made to our *Peace Eſtabliſhment*, after the peace of Paris, had left us, to begin our conteſt with America, under a grievous load; and to that cauſe, I beg leave to repeat it, and the waſteful conduct of the preſent war, may chiefly be attributed, the perſevering reſiſtance of North America. That enormous waſte of national treaſure, which has been incurred ſince 1774, without any ſucceſs, to ſatisfy the expectations, or to juſtify the confidence, of the public, has increaſed our load to an alarming degree.

It has been very clearly demonſtrated, by Dr. Smith, the ingenious author of *The Inquiry into the Nature and Cauſes of the Wealth of Nations*, that a public Debt, is, to every State, a calamity of the moſt ruinous kind; and that the waſte of public treaſure, by great fleets and armies, though the whole of the money were to be ſpent at home, muſt prove pernicious and deſtructive; nay, that it would be almoſt as much ſo then, as when they are maintained, at an equal expence, abroad. That, in both caſes, the national ſtock is equally diminiſhed, and the money,

ney, which ſhould give exertion to uſeful and productive induſtry, is diverted to the waſteful maintenance of unproductive mouths; and that the taxes by which this revenue muſt be raiſed, from the people, muſt at laſt in a manner extinguiſh, the agriculture, induſtry, and manufactures, of the Kingdom.

Theſe ſerious truths, will now no longer, I preſume, admit of diſpute; and the idle theories, which had ſuppoſed, that the public debt, was, in any reſpect, a public benefit, or that an enormous expence in the eſtabliſhment of the Prince, or in fleets and armies, whether maintained at home or abroad, was not a moſt grievous public evil, though in ſome degree a neceſſary evil, are now, I hope, for ever baniſhed, from the imaginations of thinking men.

The mode of raiſing ſupplies, for extraordinary purpoſes of the State, introduced with caution at the Revolution, by borrowing money on the public credit, has been long purſued, with very little either of caution or foreſight; and though we felt, very ſenſibly, the inconveniencies of it, towards the cloſe of the laſt war, yet, as, by cuſtom, it was conſidered as a neceſſary evil, no perſon ſeems to have thought of any other mode.

The inconveniencies, however, of having recourſe to *money-lenders*, to ſupport the public expences, are ſufficiently obvious. It is to be expected, that they will ever take advantage of the public neceſſity, to raiſe their terms; that they will even add to that neceſſity, and depreciate the

Stocks, for a time, to anſwer their purpoſe; that they will combine together, to raiſe their price, and forgetting that they are citizens, may even endeavour, by every art, to enrich themſelves, at the riſk of the total ruin of the State.

It has been a very common opinion, that none but a popular Miniſter, could procure conſiderable loans; but the truth is, that there never has been a Miniſter, who has failed to procure money, if he would give the price, which the lenders were diſpoſed to aſk.—That price will always be leſs, to a ſucceſsful Miniſter, becauſe the public credit, in his hands, will ſtand higher, but ſtill, the money will be offered, to every Miniſter, who will pay for it out of the public purſe; and the example of France, has ſhewn us, that even public bankruptcy, has not prevented the Miniſter for the day, of that country, from procuring extraordinary loans.

The high terms, extorted by *money lenders*, upon occaſion of every public loan, give to the State, which follows this pernicious plan, the appearance of diſtreſs and weakneſs, which is however no proof, that the individuals of the State, and of courſe the State itſelf, are either exhauſted, or embarraſſed.

For this ſymptom of diſtreſs, is incident to the moſt wealthy nations, if their capitals be inveſted, in very profitable adventures, or be locked up from the market, at a particular time; or when, from cauſes real or imaginary, an alarm is taken, with reſpect to national ſecurity or credit.

And

And indeed, whilſt loans are the only reſource of a nation, it muſt be ſubject, to this material diſadvantage, that a diſcontented faction, may raiſe and give countenance, to evil reports, injurious to the public credit; and ſtill more, will it be in the power, of a foreign enemy, to occaſion alarms, ſufficient to juſtify, the exorbitant exactions of *money-lenders*; ſo that the reſources of the Kingdom, would, in ſome meaſure, in ſuch a caſe, be placed in the hands of thoſe, who aimed at its utter deſtruction.

The caſe of a private individual, who is under an abſolute neceſſity of borrowing, is diſagreeable enough; but he has advantages, which do not belong to a State. The degree of his neceſſity may be known only to himſelf; and if one perſon ſhould refuſe to lend him, he may have recourſe to another; by which means, if he can offer undoubted ſecurity, he can hardly fail of ſucceſs upon reaſonable terms.—But the neceſſities of a State, in time of war, if large loans are required, can be no ſecret; a combination of all the moſt conſiderable money-lenders, is eaſily formed, becauſe the neceſſities of the State, will generally afford, ſufficient plunder, to anſwer the wiſhes of all. If any ſhould happen to be left out, of the general combination, and the Miniſter ſhould attempt to negotiate ſeparately with them, the ſecret would ſoon be out; and the other lenders, would quickly draw them, into the general conſpiracy, ſo that no alternative might be left, but either to conſent

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to the moſt exorbitant demands, or to put a ſtop to the moſt neceſſary exertions of the State, in an hour, perhaps, of the greateſt danger.

Under ſuch circumſtances, it becomes the ſpirit of a free country, to lay aſide, for a time, the practice of borrowing, and to call upon the individuals of the Kingdom, for a direct aid, equal to the public occaſions.

This aid may be given, by every perſon's paying, a certain rate or proportion of his real capital or income.—What that rate ſhould be, muſt depend upon the ſum required, compared with the total wealth of the nation.

If the money were raiſed in this manner, it would, in truth, fall much lighter upon the Kingdom, than in the mode of borrowing. It has been computed, that the terms lately demanded of Government, would coſt the public 2,670,000 *l.* as a premium, for the loan of *ſeven millions*; that is to ſay, it would coſt the public, that enormous ſum, more, than if it was to borrow the money at 4 *per cent.* (See Appendix.)

This difference, ariſes entirely, from the practice of borrowing money for public purpoſes; for it is well known, that 4 *per cent.* is a higher rate, than was requiſite to be given, on public ſecurity, before any new loans became neceſſary. This is evident, from the price at which 3 *per cents.* ſold, before the war, which was ſeldom under 87 or 88 *per cent.*, and ſometimes higher. The quantity of money in Europe, has not been diminiſhed by the war, but the demand for it, has enabled the

lenders, to raiſe its price; and this riſe of price, does not only affect the public, in the premium it is obliged to give for the loan, but it affects every branch of trade and induſtry in the Kingdom, by encouraging all the poſſeſſors of money, to raiſe their terms on private ſecurities. This is a neceſſary conſequence of a high premium given by the public; for thoſe who expect ſuch exorbitant premiums, make it their buſineſs to collect in money, from all quarters, which neceſſarily raiſes the price, to all who have occaſion to borrow.

This is not merely theory or conjecture; I appeal to facts. Our manufacturers, our traders, our farmers, and even our landed gentlemen, know, to what a degree, this expectation of Government premiums, has affected them. Money cannot now be borrowed on mortgages, on the former terms. The price of land has fallen, the quantity of circulating caſh, in the hands of our merchants, manufacturers, builders, improvers, is remarkably diminiſhed.

We are much deceived, if we think, that if the money is raiſed by borrowing, it does not fall heavy, upon every individual, poſſeſſed of property, in the Kingdom; for beſides the taxes which muſt be raiſed, to pay the intereſt of the ſum, actually advanced to the public, we muſt alſo pay the intereſt of the premium, paid for the loan, and the expence of collecting both. Nor is this all; for it is the neceſſary conſequence of every tax, that it enhances the price of the commodity, in every hand, through which it paſſes,

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to the actual conſumer; and it is the conſumers, or thoſe who poſſeſs the means of buying, who at laſt pay for the public loan.

It was computed by Sir Matthew Decker, above forty years ago, that if there were no taxes in England, a man poſſeſſed of a land eſtate of 700 *l. per ann.* would be able to live better, than a man poſſeſſed of 2000 *l. per ann.* could then do; and that therefore, every man, at that time, paid, in fact, above 13 *s.* in the pound, on account of the taxes. Our taxes have very much increaſed, ſince that time, by two expenſive wars; and though the computation of that ingenious author, proceeded upon the idea, that every public tax, fell ultimately upon the land, which is not correctly true, yet it is certain, that taxes fall upon every man, in proportion to his fortune, in a much heavier manner, than is commonly imagined.

Sir Matthew Decker has illuſtrated this, by ſhewing, that every tax is paid by the conſumer, with a great addition. The tax, for example, upon leather, is not only paid in the price of a pair of ſhoes, with an addition to the ſhoemaker, for having advanced the tax, but with a farther addition, for the tax paid by the ſhoemaker, for his own ſhoes, and for the tax which the currier, the leather-ſeller, the butcher, the grazier, &c. paid for their ſhoes; and thus a conſiderable additional ſum, is paid, for every tax, though, by being mixed with the price, it eſcapes obſervation. —Beſides this, every tax is increaſed, by the expence of collecting it, and by the embarraſſment,

and loſs of time, which is thereby occaſioned to individuals, eſpecially by the cuſtom-houſe laws, and the perquiſites of officers; all which are grievous obſtructions, to the trade and induſtry of the people.

In order to judge, however, whether it is practicable, to raiſe, in time of war, the neceſſary ſupplies, within the year, it is proper to form ſome calculation, of the national wealth.

The total wealth of Great Britain, has been computed, by different writers, at different ſums. It has undoubtedly increaſed very much, ſince the lateſt of theſe computations; and I may ſafely venture to affirm, that it now exceeds very much, *one thouſand millions.* In this I comprehend, the value of the land, the value of the houſes, the value of ſtock of all kinds, and materials of manufacture, ſhipping, caſh, money in the Funds due to inhabitants, and debts due to us by perſons out of the Kingdom, but deducting the like debts due by us, to other countries; in ſhort, I comprehend every thing which can be denominated wealth or property.

It would be tedious to enter into the various modes, by which this computation may be made; it does not reſt upon one mode, for various methods concur, to aſcertain it as much, as any computation of this ſort, can be aſcertained. One or two modes may be mentioned, which will give ſome ſort of idea, that the computation cannot be exaggerated.

The land-tax, at Four Shillings in the pound, yields about *two millions*; and if, in levying it, the land were rated at its full value, the total rent of the land, would be *ten millions per ann.* But nobody believes, that, taking the Kingdom throughout, the land is, in truth, rated, at one half of the actual rent; so that the rent of the land, cannot be reckoned at leſs, than *twenty millions per ann.* This is paid to the landlords; but the revenue of the farmers, cannot be reckoned at much leſs, than an equal ſum, for the farmer, beſides paying his rent, muſt have enough to pay for the cultivation and ſowing the ground, and a clear annual profit to himſelf, nearly equal to what he pays to the landlord, which would bring the clear produce, of the land alone, to above *forty millions per ann.*; and this, at 25 years purchaſe, would make the value of the land, *one thouſand millions*, without taking in other property to an immenſe amount, which equally conſtitutes national wealth.

Another mode of forming a calculation, is, from the number of inhabitants, and the annual revenue neceſſary to maintain them. This mode, will not however ſhew, what revenue can be ſpared to the State; for there are countries, which contain three times the number of our inhabitants, and yet cannot raiſe ſo much money, as ourſelves, becauſe their people live more poorly, and there are fewer, in proportion, who have more than a bare ſubſiſtence. This mode of calculation, muſt therefore proceed, not only upon the numbers of the people, but upon their manner of liv-

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ing; and in that way, it may give us ſome idea, of the amount of the national wealth.

The total number of inhabitants of the United Kingdom, cannot be reckoned at leſs, than *ſeven* millions, of which, Scotland contains between 1,300,000 and 1,400,000, and England between 5,600,000 and 5,700,000. This number of perſons, are annually fed, lodged and clothed, from a fund exiſting in the country. According to the manner of living of the people, we cannot reckon, that, one with another, the expence of the maintenance of each, amounts to a leſs ſum, than 7 *l.* 10 *s. per ann.* or about 4½ *d. per* day, including food, clothes, fire, candles, ſoap, and lodging. This would require a revenue of *fifty-two millions and a half per annum*, and the ſtock or fund, exiſting ſomewhere, from whence this revenue muſt ariſe, reckoning it to produce 5 *per cent.*, would amount, at twenty years purchaſe, to *one thouſand and fifty millions.*

This is not the moſt unexceptionable mode, of forming the calculation, of national wealth; but if the reſult of that computation be lower than the truth, and that the public debt, as lately increaſed, ſhould be reckoned to amount at preſent to 160 millions, beſides the long and other annuities, which will extinguiſh of themſelves, it will follow, as a conſequence, that our debt amounts, to about *one-ſixth* part of the total wealth of the nation; and therefore, in order to pay it entirely off, if ſuch an idea ſhould ever be entertained, it would be neceſſary, that every perſon poſſeſſed of 100 *l.* property, ſhould pay 16 *l.* as his ſhare of

the public debt; and if he did ſo, and were at the ſame time relieved, of all the taxes, which are now paid for the intereſt of that debt, he would be able, to live better, and carry on his buſineſs to more advantage, with the remaining 84 *l.*, than can now be done with 100 *l.*

The 160 millions, which I have mentioned as the probable amount of the national debt, ſuppoſes, the ſtockholders, to be paid, the full ſum of 100 *l.* for each 100 *l.* of 3 *per cent.* annuities; but as the preſent price in the market, of 100 *l.* in the 3 *per cents*, is not much above 60 *l.*, there can be no doubt, that if the Public were willing and able to pay off the whole at once, the ſtockholders, rather than not be paid, would accept of a ſmall advance, above the market price; and in that view, the whole might be paid, by a contribution from every man, of a little more, than 10 *per cent.* of his property, inſtead of 16 *per cent.*

But, for the purpoſe of raiſing a ſufficient ſum, for carrying on the war during two years, $1\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* of every man's capital, to be paid by inſtalments, in the courſe of two years, would be fully adequate; as that ſum, would amount, upon *one thouſand millions* of property, to *fifteen millions*, which, without ſuppoſing much œconomy, ought, with the ordinary ſupplies, to ſupport a vigorous war of two years at leaſt.

Every perſon muſt perceive, the amazing effect, which ſuch a meaſure would immediately produce, with reſpect to our national affairs; and in what a light, it would place this country, in the eyes of all Europe. The boaſted prophecies concerning national

national bankruptcy would immediately vaniſh, and the diſtinction between a free government, and every other, would be placed in the cleareſt point of view; for I may venture to affirm, that no ſtate in Europe, Holland excepted, could raiſe ſupplies for a war, in the manner propoſed. It is in a free country only, that mankind feel themſelves, ſo connected with the public proſperity, as willingly to ſacrifice, in ſupport of it, a part of their fortune, in great emergencies.

But it may be aſked, how is it poſſible to ſuppoſe, that this nation, torn to pieces, as it has been, by diſſentions, and diſſatisfied with the management of its affairs, if it were even able to raiſe, within the year, ſo large a ſum, in addition to its preſent burdens, would ever conſent to pay it, much leſs to entruſt it, to the Miniſters of the Crown? Or how would it be poſſible to deviſe a mode, of levying to this extent, an equal proportion, of every man's fortune, for the ſervice of the State?

I believe, indeed, that ſuch a plan, however important, could not be carried into execution, without a very general concurrence and approbation, of the people at large, who muſt *firſt* be convinced, of the abſolute neceſſity, of the utmoſt exertion, in the preſent criſis, to avert the black ſtorm, which threatens us from every quarter; and, *ſecondly*, the nation muſt be convinced, that it is, in every view, their real intereſt, to raiſe the ſupplies within the year, not only to avoid the extravagant demands of *money-lenders*, but to prevent the impoſition of new taxes, oppreſſive to induſtry,

duſtry, and above all, that it is their intereſt to do ſo, in order, at this criſis, to exalt the national character in the eyes of all Europe. In the *third* place, the people muſt be convinced, that the conduct of public affairs, is entruſted, not merely to men of honour and of good intentions, but to the ableſt, the firmeſt, and the moſt diſintereſted men, that are to be found in this extenſive country.

The great body of the people, at ſuch a time as this, do not turn their eyes, either to oppoſition or to men in office, as thinking, that the nation can be ſaved only, by the one or the other. They probably conceive, that as there are, doubtleſs, unfit perſons, in both deſcriptions, ſo there are amongſt each, a great many men, of integrity, of ability, and of diſintereſted public ſpirit; and that though ſome may have raſhly pledged themſelves, to the ruinous meaſure, of declaring America independent, yet that theſe, may ſtill become convinced of their miſtake; and that though others may have proved themſelves unfit, to conduct the State, in ſo perilous a moment, yet theſe may willingly lend their aid, to perſons of more ability and exertion; and at any rate, the people, I believe, are convinced, that, independent of either of the above deſcriptions, there are not wanting, a ſufficient number of men, of wiſdom, vigor, and integrity, who are fit to anſwer the utmoſt expectations, of a brave and generous people.

Without ſuch an arrangement, I am confident, that the full ſpirit and force of this country, cannot be called forth. It never has been effectually

called forth, in times of war, when the King's Miniſters, did not poſſeſs, and deſerve to poſſeſs, the full confidence of the nation; and this is the real diſtinction, between the exertions of a free people, and of thoſe who are under an abſolute government. In the one, the conduct of public affairs, is ever entruſted, in times of danger, to thoſe in whom the people can confide; and then, every man's zeal for the general proſperity, exerts itſelf with full force. In deſpotic governments, on the contrary, the Miniſters of the Crown, are choſen, without any attention to the wiſhes of the people, who, if the choice happens to be improper, ſoon become diſguſted, and diſcouraged, by every want of ſucceſs; and neither the naval nor the military officers, can be expected, to perform their duty, with becoming zeal or alacrity.

In abſolute governments, indeed, this want of zeal, may be counteracted, by ſtrict diſcipline and exemplary puniſhment, which, in ſome degree, may compenſate the want of zeal; but in a government like ours, if the Miniſters of the Crown, have loſt the public opinion, they dare not puniſh the moſt negligent officer; and nothing therefore can be ſubſtituted, with us, inſtead of that generous zeal, which is the natural characteriſtic of freedom.

If the executive power of the State, for the purpoſe of conducting the war, were placed in proper hands, regulations might be made, for controlling the diſburſement of the Public Money, in ſuch a manner, as to remove, in ſome degree, the natural and commendable ſuſpicion and jealouſy of the

the people.—Whatever ſhould be raiſed, as an extraordinary aid, for the ſervice of the year, in time of war, might be paid by the county collectors, to the Bank, in the name of a Committee to be appointed by the counties, and iſſued from thence by their orders, on proper requiſitions, to the Treaſury, from time to time, under ſuch regulations, as might be deviſed.

Though it ſeems abſolutely neceſſary, that the executive power, ſhould be entruſted, with the diſburſement of the public money, that the public ſervice may not be obſtructed; yet this, is perfectly conſiſtent, with the moſt ſtrict examination, of the accounts of the diſburſements, made by every public office. In former times, it was thought ſufficient, that Parliament might call for, and inſpect, every account of public money; but experience has ſhewn, that this is a very imperfect control. The labour and difficulty of ſuch an inveſtigation, is ſufficient, to damp the zeal of independent Members of Parliament; and though there are officers, appointed for the control of public accounts, yet as theſe controllers are named by the executive power, they certainly cannot be conſidered, as proper checks. It would therefore be expedient, upon occaſion of an extraordinary aid of this ſort, that ſome perſons were ſelected, for the buſineſs, annually, as a Committee, and named by the counties, with power to call for perſons, accounts, and vouchers, to take evidence upon oath, and to make their report annually to Parliament, before any new money is voted.

If the confidence of the people could be revived, by a proper arrangement in the miniſterial department, and by proper checks, with reſpect to the diſburſement of public money, there can be little doubt, that the utmoſt zeal would ſoon break forth, not only for carrying on the public ſervice, and for reſtoring the kingdom, to its former envied ſituation, but for raiſing, within the year, the ſum propoſed, for carrying on the war.

The mode of aſcertaining, and of levying, the propoſed $1\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* of the clear amount of each man's fortune, would not, in that caſe, be ſo difficult, as may at firſt ſight be imagined.

The Dutch, on ſome critical emergencies of their ſtate, have had recourſe to an aid of this ſort; and the method adopted, I believe, was, that every man, ſhould, upon oath, put into a box or cheſt, for the public uſe, a certain proportion of his fortune, without diſcovering how much he put in, and without further inquiry.—This mode of taxation, is ſaid to have produced, a very large ſum; and it was ſuppoſed, that great fidelity had been obſerved, in fulfilling the terms of the oath. Every man, was at that time convinced, of the imminent danger of the State; and the general manners of the people, in an early period of the Republic, when the firſt aid of this ſort took place, were perhaps more pure, than ought to be expected, in this country, in the preſent age.

With us, it would perhaps be neceſſary, to deviſe ſome mode, of controlling, in ſome degree, the inclination, which, amidſt the moſt general

public ſpirit, might exiſt in ſome individuals, to pay a leſs ſum than they ought. And ſuch a mode, I imagine, might be deviſed, for rendering the aid effectual, without expoſing the amount of any man's fortune, contrary to his inclination; but I apprehend it would be eſſential, in order to avoid jealouſy, as well as oppreſſion, to place the power of collecting the money, as is now done with reſpect to the land-tax, in the hands of perſons choſen by the people themſelves, and not named by the Miniſters of the Crown.—Honour and diſtinction, ought ever to attend, remarkable inſtances of zeal for the commonwealth, and ſome mark of honour, might be annexed, to every inſtance of uncommon zeal, in contributing, on this occaſion, to the public ſupport; which arrangement would probably produce the happieſt effects.

But it would be preſumption, to offer any plan, that may have occurred to me, in a matter of ſo much conſequence.—If the general idea is approved, men of better information, and happier talents, will readily point out, the beſt mode of effectuating the purpoſe intended; and I have no doubt, that the meaſure will be found extremely practicable, if the voice of the nation gives encouragement to the general plan.

In order, that money might be more eaſily found, by every one, for anſwering the ſucceſſive payments, to the public, it would be proper, that the advances ſhould be made, by many different inſtalments; and that the times of theſe inſtalments,

ſhould

ſhould ſucceed, at proper intervals, the regular iſſues from the Treaſury and Bank, for the public ſervices, or the payment of intereſt on the ſtocks.

It might alſo be proper, that a bill ſhould paſs, for enabling foreigners to lend money, on mortgages of land or houſes, in Great Britain, at an intereſt not exceeding 5 *per cent.* upon the ſame plan, as has been already adopted, by act of Parliament, with reſpect to mortgages in the Weſt-India iſlands. And whatever obſtructions exiſt, by the laws of Scotland, to loans on the ſecurity of land, from England or other countries, ought alſo to be removed by act of Parliament.

If, notwithſtanding theſe precautions, any doubt or apprehenſion ſhould be entertained, that there would be a want of circulating caſh, to anſwer the ſeveral inſtalments, it would not be difficult, to deviſe a temporary means, of ſupplying that defect, and of rendering abortive, the attempts of the money-lenders, to take the ſame ſort of advantage, of individuals, which they have been accuſtomed to take, of the Public.

I am, however, very well convinced, that there would not be occaſion, for any ſuch temporary expedient. There is no ſcarcity of money in the kingdom; for great ſums are known to be amaſſed in particular hands, to be ready for a loan, and the exchange with other countries, has, for ſome time, been much in favour of Great Britain. The expectation of a high premium from the Public, has been the ſole cauſe, of collecting money, from all quarters, into a few hands, who will not continue,

tinue, to with-hold it from individuals, when all expectation, of ſuch extravagant profit from the public, ſhall be at an end.

But it would greatly facilitate the whole of ſuch a plan, if the people could be inſpired with a confidence, that, when peace ſhould be reſtored, our *ordinary expence* would be diminiſhed, and that the Sovereign himſelf, would ſet the example, which ought to be followed, by a diminution of all ſalaries exceeding a certain ſum; and a very great reduction, ought at any rate to be made, both in the army and navy departments, beyond what took place at the laſt peace.

That we had no occaſion to increaſe our eſtabliſhment, as we then did, is apparent, from this undeniable fact, that France, at that time, made a conſiderable reduction of her force, below its former peace eſtabliſhment; and the increaſing our own eſtabliſhment, beyond a due proportion to that of our neighbours, can at no time anſwer any other purpoſe, than to excite jealouſy, and to compel rival nations, to increaſe their eſtabliſhment, to keep pace with ours, to the manifeſt injury of both countries.

And with reſpect to the reduction of ſalaries, I beg leave to obſerve, that the idea, that it is neceſſary to annex, high ſalaries, to offices of truſt and confidence, is, I believe, extremely erroneous. The paſſion of ambition, is ſufficiently ſtrong, to induce all men, of liberal minds, to ſerve the public, on account of the diſtinction, which naturally accompanies ſuch ſituations. By

adding

adding to that motive, another baſe one, of avarice, we bring into the competition, another deſcription of men, who, forgetting the meanneſs of their talents, the indolence of their diſpoſitions, the cowardice of their minds, and their total want of elevation, extent of views, and true magnanimity, are apt, by every unworthy art, to thruſt themſelves into public departments, and to conceive, that they have fulfilled, the whole of their duty, when they have received their ſalaries, whilſt they leave the public buſineſs, to be woefully conducted, by Secretaries and Clerks.

It is ſo far from being true, that the higher and more important the office, the ſalary ſhould be the higher, that it is directly the reverſe, becauſe the honour annexed to high and important offices, is ſufficient, without emolument, to induce all, who are fit to hold them, to aſpire eagerly, at theſe ſituations, even to the prejudice of their private fortunes; and if no ſalaries were annexed, there is reaſon to believe, that very few would be induced to continue in office, after they felt, and the nation was convinced, that they were unfit to continue.

Notwithſtanding the immenſe waſte of public money in the government of France, yet it is a remarkable fact, that almoſt the whole eſſential buſineſs of the State, is carried on, at this hour, with little or no expence to the public, and that people eagerly preſs forward to act in public ſituations, merely on account of the honour and the influence, with which it is attended.

It is well known, that the adminiſtration of juſtice, is in this manner carried on in France; for people pay a high price, for a law office, and are contented to do the duty, which is very laborious, without receiving, by way of ſalary, any thing like the intereſt of their money. Their motive is, that the ſituation gives them rank and preeminence amongſt their fellow-ſubjects; and the vulgar opinion, that the Judges in that country, are corrupt, will be found, upon inquiry, to have very little foundation. The duty of almoſt every other office in the Provinces, is diſcharged at as cheap a rate to the public: nay, the officers of the army, actually ſerve for leſs pay, than is neceſſary for their ſupport, and, in ſpite of the frugality for which they are diſtinguiſhed, generally ruin their own private fortunes, in the ſervice of the State.

The waſte of the public treaſure, ariſes, in that country, from an immenſe ſtanding army; and the idle and profuſe extravagance of a Court, which, from the nature of the conſtitution, is under no control with reſpect to its expence.

It will probably be ſaid, that in deſpotic Governments, the poſſeſſion of office, carries with it a degree of protection, and a power too, of oppreſſion, which in a free country are out of the queſtion. But I am informed, that in the Republic of Holland, the ſalaries of very high and important offices, are exceedingly trifling; and in our country, we ſee, with how much eagerneſs, the office of Lord-Lieutenant of a county, is ſolicited, though attended with expence, inſtead of emolument.

If the national expence, were reduced within reaſonable bounds, a great part of the public debt, might, in time of peace, be paid off in a few years, by a faithful application of the Sinking Fund. The whole of the taxes neceſſary to be levied, might then be eaſily thrown, upon a few articles of luxury, and every oppreſſion upon the induſtry of the people, by taxes on the neceſſaries of life, might be entirely removed.

The articles of tea, ſugar, and tobacco, if ſubjected to exciſe, inſtead of cuſtoms, would of themſelves, raiſe a very large ſum, without any obſtruction to induſtry—and coffee and chocolate would require to be taxed, in ſome degree, to ſupport the tea duty.

Wine and ſpirits, are proper objects of taxation; and the duty on wine, would be greatly increaſed, by being exciſed, as there is little doubt, that at leaſt one-third of the preſent conſumption, is brewed at home.

Beer, though not abſolutely a neceſſary of life, has become ſo in a degree, from the habits and manners of the people. It is, however, a proper object of taxation; and if all other oppreſſive taxes were removed, and the whole of the preſent taxes on beer, were annually impoſed upon malt, inſtead of being levied, on the other ſtages of the manufacture, it would diſtribute the burden more equally, and would even raiſe more money after lowering the tax; for I am perſuaded, that inſtead of about 24 *s.* or 25 *s.* *per* quarter, which may be reckoned the amount of all the preſent duties

ties on malt, beer, and ale, if a tax of one guinea per quarter, were impoſed on malt, it would raiſe a revenue of 3,325,000 *l.* on 3,166,666 quarters of malt; which quantity is a very moderate computation, of the total conſumption of malt.

A duty of 12 *s. per cent.* on ſugar, would not be too high, if other oppreſſive taxes were taken off; and this, upon 1,500,000 cwt., would produce 900,000 *l.*

The tax upon tobacco, reckoning the conſumption at 15,000 hogſheads, of 900 lb. to the hogſhead, might yield a very conſiderable revenue; for it might be taxed, as in France, to a much higher rate, than the price has, perhaps, ever aroſe to, in England, without diminiſhing much, the preſent conſumption. Suppoſe the tax were 2 *s. per* pound, the amount would be 1,350,000 *l.* and as the duty might be effectually levied by the exciſe, ſo as to prevent ſmuggling, and there would be no ground for allowing, as at preſent, ten pounds in every hogſhead, duty free, any diminution in the conſumption, would, I believe, be more than compenſated, by theſe means.

A ſimilar computation might be made, with reſpect to the produce of the duty upon tea, coffee, chocolate, wine, and ſpirits, and it would be evident, that, from theſe ſources alone, without any other taxes or duties, a greater revenue might be raiſed, without complaint, and without injury or obſtruction to any one branch of trade, induſtry, or manufacture, than would perhaps be neceſſary, for every reaſonable purpoſe of the State; and the whole

might be levied, at much leſs expence, than at preſent.

Another important effect, of ſuch encouragement to trade and induſtry, would certainly be, to diminiſh the heavy burden of poor's rates, all over England, which, of itſelf, is, at preſent, an enormous grievance.

Dr. Smith is of opinion, that if raw ſilk were allowed to be imported, duty free, we ſhould ſoon ſupply the greateſt part of Europe with wrought ſilks; and this example is ſufficient to prove, the extent of the miſchiefs, ariſing from our preſent ſyſtem of taxation.

But theſe ſpeculations, do not apply to the preſent moment; we are now arrived at a criſis, which calls aloud, for the vigorous exertion of every public virtue; and on this occaſion, all who are attached to their country, ought certainly to forget, every party prejudice, and every ſelfiſh conſideration, and concur, like men, in putting the national affairs, into the ableſt hands, that public confidence may be effectually reſtored. If this were done, I am convinced, that, conſidering the importance of the objects before us, the hazards to which we are expoſed on the one hand, and the glory we may acquire on the other, there would not be wanting, a very general and hearty concurrence, of the nation at large, to raiſe the neceſſary ſupplies within the year; for this is the moſt marked and ſtriking characteriſtic, of a free State, that every man conſiders himſelf, as perſonally intereſted, in the public proſperity; and in the preſent

ſent caſe, every man would feel a pride, in contemplating the effect, which ſuch a meaſure muſt immediately produce, upon the enemies of this country; and the certainty which it would give, of ſpeedily reſtoring to Great Britain and its Colonies, that happineſs, pre-eminence, and ſecurity, which, till of late, we had long enjoyed, amongſt the ſurrounding nations.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

THE nature of the terms, ſaid to have been demanded of Government, by the money-lenders, were diſtinctly explained, in a paper publiſhed in the *Public Adverti ſer*, of the 5th of January 1779, by an Author, whom it is my misfortune not to know, but to whom I think the Public is very much indebted. I ſhall therefore take the liberty of reprinting it here.

" As the time is approaching, for what is commonly called *opening* the *Budget*, when a conſiderable loan, will probably form a part of the year's ſupply, that Gentlemen may be prepared to judge, with ſome accuracy, of the ſort of bargain they are making for their Conſtituents, the following circumſtances are recommended to their conſideration.

" It is common to call by the general name of *Intereſt*, all that conſideration, which is paid by the borrower of money, to the lender, over and above the capital, or ſum borrowed; but it will greatly aſſiſt our judgment, if we accuſtom ourſelves to conſider that ſum only as properly called *Intereſt*, which muſt be paid for money, taken up on the moſt indiſputable ſecurity:

" Any thing above that, is more of the nature of " *Iuſurance.*

" Thus, if a merchant was to borrow money " on goods, which he depoſited with the lender, " he might be only forced to pay four *per cent.* " for a year's loan; but if the goods were of a " periſhable or hazardous nature, ſo as, not to be " inſured under two *per Cent.* the lender might " take this riſque on himſelf, and on that account " would very fairly demand ſix *per cent.* It is " for the ſame reaſon, that a bond debt, com- " monly bears rather higher intereſt than a mort- " gage; becauſe the former, being only a per- " ſonal ſecurity, is ſubject to ſome riſque, which " the latter is not. Government ſecurity has been " uſually deemed, a mortgage of the beſt ſort, on " account of the punctual payment of intereſt, " and the eaſe with which the capital may be " called in; and, therefore, ought to bear lower " intereſt, than any other, and will always do ſo, " unleſs, either profuſion and miſmanagement, " ſhould diſſipate our wealth, faſter than our " trade, its great ſource, can ſupply it, or elſe, " ſome wild and extravagant ſcheme of Govern- " ment, ſhould, by alarming any part of the world " for its liberties, draw ſeveral powerful States " into a combination, to clip our wings; who, " by being able to leſſen our commerce, would " certainly diminiſh our credit.

" As annuities may, perhaps, make a part of " the loan, the following ſhort account of their

" nature,

" nature may aſſiſt the judgment of any Gentle-
" man, not uſed to the calculation of them.

" If, inſtead of giving five *per cent.* for the
" loan of 100 *l.* I agree with the lender, to give
" him 10 *l.* *per ann.* till the debt is diſcharged,
" it is plain, that the firſt year's payment, muſt
" be conſidered, as having diſcharged the intereſt
" of the debt for that year, and 5 *l.* of the prin-
" cipal; ſo that I now only owe 95 *l.* the intereſt
" of which, being but 4 *l.* 15 *s.* the ſecond payment
" of 10 *l.* diſcharges 5 *l.* 5 *s.* of the remaining
" debt, and reduces it to 89 *l.* 15 *s.* and it will
" be found, that my debt, will be reduced to leſs
" than 10 *l.* in fourteen years. From whence I
" conclude, that when the intereſt of money is
" five *per cent.* an annuity of 10 *l.* for fourteen
" years, is not worth 100 *l.* but the ſame annuity
" for fifteen years, is worth more than 100 *l.*

" On the ſame principle, the value of any an-
" nuity may be found, by any perſon, very little
" acquainted with figures; and there are tables
" ready calculated, for the uſe of perſons, who
" have not leiſure or inclination, to calculate
" themſelves. By theſe tables, it will be found,
" that an annuity of 100 *l.* for twenty-nine years,
" is worth 1698 *l.* and a fraction, when intereſt
" is at four *per cent.* that it is worth 1514 *l.* and a
" fraction, at five *per cent.* and 1359 *l.* and a frac-
" tion, at ſix *per cent.*

" The next article which we may expect, is a
" lottery. It is an uſual method, to give the ſub-
" ſcribers to a loan, a certain number of lottery

" tickets,

" tickets, at their true value of 10 *l.* each, by " which they make an advantage, of the folly of " ſuch people, as will rather give 4 *l.* or 5 *l.* for " the permiſſion to gamble for 10 *l.* than be out " of Fortune's way, as the expreſſion is. For " this advantage, the ſubſcribers give Govern- " ment credit for 3 *l.* each ticket, if the lottery " does not exceed 50,000 tickets; though in re- " ality, the ſum levied on the Public, is half as " much more; and the miſchief beyond my power " to eſtimate, by the gaming offices which it en- " courages, to the deſtruction of induſtry.

" To this may be added, a conſiderable ad- " vantage to the ſubſcribers, by the intereſt com- " mencing before the money is advanced, which, " in the laſt loan, amounted to two-fifths of a " year's intereſt on the whole loan.

" To illuſtrate all the above, by one example, " I will take for granted, that a loan is to be this " year adopted on the plan we have ſeen in the " News-papers, " *That is, ſeven millions to be bor-* " *rowed, for which every ſubſcriber of one thouſand* " *to have that capital in* 3 per cents, *together with* " *an annuity of* 3 ½ per cent. *or thirty-five pounds,* " *for twenty-nine years, and ſeven lottery tickets* " *at* 10 *l.*

" We ſhall ſee, at different rates of intereſt, " what ſort of a bargain, this would be, for the " Public.

" And *firſt*, we will ſuppoſe, Government could
" borrow money at 4 *per cent.*

	l.	*s.*
" 7,000,000 *l.* of 3 *per cents*, which " then would be at 75 *l.* would " be worth - - -	5,250,000	0
" 3 ½ *per cent.* on D°, or 245,000 *l.* " *per annum*, at the above price " of 1698 *l.* and a fraction, for " each 100 *l.* of this annuity, " for 29 years, or about 17 years " purchaſe, would be worth -	4,161,006	10
" 49,000 lottery tickets, at 3 *l.* -	147,000	0
" Two-fifths of a year's intereſt on " 7,000,000 *l.* at 4 *per cent.* -	112,000	0
	9,670,006	10
Deduct	7,000,000	0
Premium	2,670,006	10

" There would remain 2,670,006 *l.* 10 *s.* as a
" premium for lending 7,000,000 *l.* at 4 *per cent.*

" Let us try it at 5 *per cent.*

	l.	*s.*
" 7,000,000 *l.* of 3 *per cents*, would " then be, at 60, and worth -	4,200,000	0
" 3 ½ *per cent.* on D°, or 245,000 *l.* " *per ann.* at the above price, of " 1514 *l.* and a fraction, for each " 100 *l.* of this annuity for 29 " years, or about 15 years pur- " chaſe, would be - -	3,709,545	0
" Lottery Tickets - - -	147,000	0
Carried over	8,056,545	0

	l.	*s.*
Brought over	8,056,545	0
" Two-fifths of a year's intereſt on		
" 7,000,000 *l.* at *5 per cent.* -	140,000	0
	8,196,545	0
Deduct	7,000,000	0
Premium	1,196,545	0

At 6 *per cent.*

" 7,000,000 *l.* of *3 per cents*, at 50 *l.*	3,500,000	0
" Annuity of 245,000 *l.* at the		
" above price of 1359 *l.* and a		
" fraction, for each 100 *l.* of		
" this annuity for 29 years, or		
" about 13 ½ years purchaſe -	3,309,721	10
" Lottery Tickets - -	147,000	0
" Two-fifths of a year's intereſt on		
" 7,000,000 *l.* at *6 per cent.* -	168,000	0
	7,124,721	10
Deduct	7,000,000	0
Premium	124,721	10

So that if the News-paper had any authority for ſtating the above, as the propoſed terms of the loan, the Public would give, almoſt 2 *per cent.* premium, to borrow money, on a fund equal to 6 *per cent.* never redeemable; but the above mode of calculation, will do for whatever may be the real terms of the loan.

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